

# Gov. Evers: Visits capital building projects across state, highlights historic proposed long-term investments in state's infrastructure

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers [this week released](#) \$3.8 billion in recommended investments in his 2023-25 Capital Budget for the renovation and renewal of the state's existing infrastructure and to support major projects across the state in 28 counties. To highlight these investments and their regional and statewide impact, Gov. Evers visited projects in communities in Janesville, Green Bay, Milwaukee, Spooner, and at three University of Wisconsin (UW) System campuses.

“With our state in the best fiscal position we’ve ever been in and an unprecedented budget surplus of about \$7 billion, we have a responsibility and the opportunity to create prosperity that will define our state for generations, and these capital building projects will do just that,” said Gov. Evers. “From improving state facilities and modernizing our UW campuses to investing in local community projects that will pay dividends for years to come, my capital budget recommendations are about doing the right thing and investing in and building the sort of future we want to see for our state.”

The governor's proposal represents one of the strongest investments to date for Wisconsin's facility infrastructure without the burden of 20 years of debt service for general obligation debt. At a four percent comparison interest rate, Gov. Evers' plan to fund \$1.9 billion of the capital improvement projects instead of borrowing will save taxpayers nearly \$1 billion in future debt service payments.

The recommended investments will also help grow the economy by providing family-supporting jobs and supporting businesses throughout the state. According to Associated General Contractors of Wisconsin, for every \$1 in construction spending, there is \$1.84 of economic activity generated in Wisconsin. Additionally, for every \$1 million of construction spending, 12 jobs are supported in the state's economy. As a result, it is estimated the governor's proposed Capital Budget supports approximately \$6.8 billion in economic activity and 45,000 jobs throughout Wisconsin.

The 2023-25 Capital Budget Agency Requests and Governor's Recommendations can be found [here](#), and highlights from the governor's visits across the state are below.

On Tuesday, Feb. 28, Gov. Evers and Wisconsin Department of Administration Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld visited Janesville to announce the release of his 2023-25 Capital Budget recommendations with a visit to the Janesville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. While there, he announced his recommendations include a \$15 million investment to support the construction of the Woodman's Sports and Convention Center in Janesville. This facility will provide a new ice arena and multi-purpose spaces for athletics, conventions, and trade shows. Drawing crowds from Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago, and beyond, it's estimated the new facility could generate more than \$13 million annually in new economic output in Janesville alone. He was joined for the announcement by City Council President Paul Benson, Johnson Financial Group Regional President Larry Squire, State Rep. Sue Conley (D-Janesville), State Sen. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit), representatives from the Janesville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Janesville Jets hockey team, and many other local elected and community leaders. Photos from the event are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Following the visit to Janesville, Gov. Evers and Secretary Blumenfeld visited the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay. The governor is recommending a \$7 million investment in his 2023-25 Capital Budget proposal for the National Railroad Museum to expand the museum's Lenfestey Center. This expansion will help provide additional exhibit, educational, community, and outdoor space for students and visitors. On average, the museum sees 100,000 visitors annually, and this investment will help the museum continue to grow its exhibits, uses, and attendance. Photos from the governor's visit are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Next, on Wednesday, March 1, Gov. Evers and Secretary Blumenfeld continued their

statewide tour with a visit to the Bronzeville Neighborhood in Milwaukee, where they visited the African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin to highlight the governor's recommendation for a \$5 million investment to help support the construction of the Bronzeville Center for the Arts' African American Art Center. The Bronzeville Center for the Arts' African American Art Center will educate, celebrate, and support African American artists from across the state and beyond to attract new visitors to the city of Milwaukee and Wisconsin. Photos from the governor's visit to the Bronzeville Neighborhood are available [here](#) and [here](#). On Wednesday, they also took tours of the current Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Service Center and State Patrol Post in Spooner. The existing Spooner DMV Service Center and the State Patrol Post are both more than 50 years old and beyond their recommended useful life. Also, maintenance and major system replacement costs over the next five to 10 years are estimated to exceed the cost of building a new facility. Therefore, the governor is proposing \$11.4 million to build a new facility that will house both offices and employees from the Division of Transportation System Development. Photos from the governor's visit to Spooner are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Finally, Gov. Evers is recommending a significant investment of approximately \$1.8 billion for capital improvement projects across the UW System, and on Thursday, March 2, Gov. Evers and Secretary Blumenfeld visited three UW campuses to highlight projects at the campuses and across the UW System. They started the day with a visit to UW-Oshkosh, where they toured Donner and Taylor Residence Halls. The governor is recommending an investment of \$57.6 million to renovate Donner Hall, built in 1962, and the connected Webster Hall, built in 1957, to better serve students living there. They also heard about The Gruenhagen Conference Center, which the governor is recommending an investment of \$20.4 million to replace the building's failing plumbing infrastructure. Photos from the visit to UW-Oshkosh are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Gov. Evers and Secretary Blumenfeld then visited UW-Eau Claire to tour Phillips Science Hall. The governor is recommending investing more than \$231 million to demolish Phillips Hall and continue with phase two of building the new science and health sciences building on campus. Phillips Hall was built in 1963 and cannot support the technology and space needed for a modern STEM education. The new science and health science building will enable the campus to provide the education expected of a UW campus by students, local partners, and employers, such as Mayo Clinic and Hewlett Packard Enterprises. Photos of the governor's visit to UW-Eau

Claire are available [here](#) and [here](#).

The governor and secretary ended the day at UW-La Crosse, where they toured the Prairie Springs Science Center and Cowley Hall. Similar to the project at UW-Eau Claire, Cowley Hall was built in 1963 and does not support the technology and space needed for a comprehensive STEM education on campus. The governor is recommending an investment of \$182.5 million to complete the Prairie Springs Science Center and demolish Cowley Hall. The Prairie Springs Science Center will include new instructional and research laboratories with associated support spaces, larger classrooms, a greenhouse, an observatory, a specimen museum, an animal care facility, a maker space, and additional offices. Photos of the governor's visit to UW-La Crosse are available [here](#) and [here](#).

In addition to these UW projects, the capital budget makes investments at UW-Madison and UW-Stevens Point for building projects in the 2023-25 biennium and also provides funds to begin to advance projects at UW-Milwaukee, UW-Stout, and UW-Whitewater to ensure the projects are able to move forward in the 2025-27 Capital Budget.

The State Building Commission will meet Thurs., March 23, 2023, to vote on the governor's recommendations. Following that vote, the State Building Commission's Capital Budget Recommendations are statutorily required to be submitted to the Joint Committee on Finance by the first Tuesday in April.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).